

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 EUR-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13
/077 W

-----272307Z 097705 /65

O R 272230Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBAYCY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4443
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 2516

E.O. 11652: X-GDS 1&2
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, ES, PGOV, PINS
SUBJECT: SALVADORAN PRIEST DETAINED AND BRUTALIZED

REF: SAN SALVADOR 2404

1. REFTTEL DESCRIBED THE GOES SECURITY SERVICE OPERATION IN AND AROUND THE TOWN OF AGUILARES ON MAY 19 WHICH RESULTED IN AT LEAST SEVEN DEAD, AND THREE FOREIGN PRIESTS EXPELLED FROM THE COUNTRY. A SALVADORAN PRIEST, VICTOR GUEVARA SIGUENZA, WAS ARRESTED BY THE NATIONAL GUARD DURING THE ROUNDUP AND SEARCH. HIS DETENTION AND RELEASE WERE FIRST MADE PUBLIC BY A NATIONAL GUARD HANDOUT ISSUED ON MAY 23. IT DESCRIBED GUEVARA SIGUENZA AS HAVING NOT IDENTIFIED HIMSELF AS A PRIEST, ACTING SUSPICIOUS, AND BEING NEAR THE HOUSE WHICH THE GUARD CLAIMED WAS AN FPL SAFEHOUSE.

2. THE PRIEST RELEASED A LETTER TO THE MEDIA ON MAY 24 EXPLAINING HIS SIDE OF THE ARREST. GUEVARA SIGUENZA
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STATED THAT THE AGENTS WHO ARRESTED HIM WERE FULLY AWARE HE WAS A PRIEST. HE CHARGED THAT HE HAD BEEN BADLY MISTREATED IN DETENTION, SUFFERING BOTH SEVERE PHYSICAL BLOWS AND OFFENSIVE VERBAL HARRASSMENT.

3. COMMENT. THE PAPAL NUNCIO, NORMALLY WILLING TO GIVE THE GOES EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO RATIONALIZE ITS

BEHAVIOR AGAINST THE CHURCH, TOLD THE AMBASSADOR AND DCM THAT WHAT THE GUARD DID TO THIS PRIEST QUOTE WENT BEYOND SADISM END QUOTE. ON THE AMBASSADOR'S DEPARTURE CALL ON ARCHBISHOP ROMERO, THE LATTER CONFIRMED THAT GUEVARA SIGUENZA HAD RECEIVED A HARSH PHYSICAL BEATING RESULTING IN MULTIPLE BRUISES ON HIS BODY, AND HAD BEEN SUBJECTED TO HUMILIATING NON-CORPORAL ABUSE. UNLIKE THE FAMOUS ALAS BROTHERS, TWO SALVADORAN PRIESTS WHOSE NAMES ARE SYNONOMOUS WITH "RADICAL AGITATORS" IN THE GOES EYES AND WHO FLED THE COUNTRY ON MAY 25, GUEVARA SIGUENZA PLANS TO REMAIN IN COUNTRY. HE WILL BE TRANSFERRED FROM THE NORTH CENTRAL PART OF THE COUNTRY TO A NEW, PRESUMABLY SAFER PARISH.

4. THE ARCHBISHOP ALSO EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE AMBASSADOR AND EMBASSY IN HIS RECENT EFFORTS TO PROTECT THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF HUX PRIESTS. THE AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED THANKS AND HIS CONVICTION THAT HIS SUCCESSOR AND THE REST OF THE EMBASSY WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY CARRY ON THE SAME POSTURE. LOZANO

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DETENTION, HUMAN RIGHTS, CLERGYMEN, CHURCH STATE RELATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 27-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977SANSAA02516
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770190-0933
Format: TEL
From: SAN SALVADOR
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977059/aaaaahkb.tel
Line Count: 83
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Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 SAN SALVADOR 2404
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2629373
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SALVADORAN PRIEST DETAINED AND BRUTALIZED
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, PGOV, PINS, ES, (GUEVARA SIGUENZA, VICTOR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e06e179a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009